

LAIAG Steering Group Notes (July 19, 2006)
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Persons present: Richard Searle, Mike Ortega, Alan Seitz, Tedd Haas, Homer Hansen, Susan Pater

Discussion on Drought Response Working Group:

Challenge of how to deal with comments from individuals that there is sufficient capacity to handle with some draw down. Justification for conservation? Deal with specific matter of drought. Alleviate short term probably not long term.

Ag is trying to address and deal with issue through FSA and NRCS. Preventing planting, insurance to lay ground out. Tied to drought – reduces pressure on aquifer. Preventing planting is set up for the Midwest where too wet, they aren't quite sure how to deal with the reverse. Trying to get a ruling on that now.

NRCS equip program is to facilitate farming and to improve irrigation efficiency such as drip and sprinkler systems. Some areas are taking Equip set aside program to lay out for water conservation – some dollars reserved for that. Can lay out for up to 3 years. Need to sell as an overdraft problem rather than drought.

A few programs are counter productive to drought. Should dollars be going out that increases water usage when in drought. Program pumps dollars in to keep farming efficient rather than set aside.

Politically could factor in drought status when considering re-zoning.

Drought is a simple concept for people to understand. What they don't understand is the connection to them.

In Douglas they realize it will cost more for them to pump in the future without conservation. They are encouraging a "beat the peak" type of program. Educate about all the things that could be done.

Conservation is something everyone should do all the time in a desert climate.

Challenge to get communication out.

Potential for state policy.

Do we want to be re-active or pro-active.

Education issue. Encourage water conservation on a county-wide basis.

Need to look at the policies that the local and county governments already have in place.

Will send a copy of the Douglas policy to the steering group.

Plan of Action Drought Response Working Group:

- 1) Review State recommendations for the various drought stages.
- 2) Review copies of city conservation plans.
- 3) Send out state recommendations to LAIAG for input back to the working group.
 - a. Make recommendations on what applies, what doesn't, what needs added.
 - b. Return comments by September 8th.
- 4) Working group compiles feedback and makes draft recommendations to the Steering group by October 6th. Steering group will meet October 18th.
- 5) LAIAG will meet November 3rd to review and approve recommendations.

The monitoring working group and the outreach working group will develop a plan of action to bring to the October steering group meeting.